

CLAIM LISTING

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1 through 21 (Canceled).

22. (Previously presented) A barrel for use with a tampon applicator assembly comprising:

a tapered main section disposed between an insertion tip and a finger grip, said tapered main section having a main section taper ratio of about 1.07 to about 1.15;

said insertion tip having a plurality of petals; and

said finger grip having a first region, a gripping region, and a second region,

wherein said first region intersects with said tapered main section at a first plane having a first outer dimension, said gripping region intersects with said first region and has a second outer dimension, said second region intersects with said gripping region and has a third outer dimension, said first outer dimension being larger than said second outer dimension and said third outer dimension being larger than said second outer dimension, and

wherein said first outer dimension defines a maximum outer dimension of said barrel.

23. (Original) The assembly as in claim 22, wherein said maximum outer dimension is located closer to said finger grip than to said insertion tip.

24. (Original) The assembly as in claim 22, wherein said third outer dimension is equal to said first outer dimension.

Claim 25 (Canceled).

26. (Original) The assembly as in claim 22, wherein said insertion tip has a taper ratio of more than about 0.66.

27. (Original) The assembly as in claim 22, wherein said plurality of petals have a petal length-to-width ratio of about 2 to about 3.

28. (Currently amended) A barrel for use with a tampon applicator assembly comprising:

a tapered main section adjacent an insertion tip and a finger grip adjacent said tapered main section and opposite said insertion tip,

wherein said finger grip has a first region and a gripping region,

wherein said first region intersects with said tapered main section at a first plane having a maximum outer dimension, said gripping region intersects with said first region and has a second outer dimension, said maximum outer dimension being larger than said second outer dimension, and

wherein said tapered main section has a taper that decreases from said ~~maximum outer dimension~~finger grip to said insertion tip.

29. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said maximum outer dimension is located from said insertion tip about 55% to 85% of an overall length of said barrel.

30. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said maximum outer dimension is located from said insertion tip about 60% to 75% of an overall length of said barrel.

31. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said tapered main section has a main section taper ratio of about 1.07 to about 1.15.

32. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said tapered

main section has a main section taper ratio of about 1.08 to about 1.13.

33. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said insertion tip further comprises a plurality of petals.

34. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said insertion tip has a taper ratio of between about 0.66 and about 1.6.

35. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 34, wherein said taper ratio is between about 0.7 and 0.9.

36. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 33, wherein said plurality of petals have a petal length-to-width ratio of about 0.8 to about 3.

37. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 36, wherein said petal length-to-width ratio is over about 2.

38. (Previously presented) The assembly as in claim 28, wherein said maximum outer dimension is about 10% to about 30% larger than said second outer.